## Humphrey-Williams House

### Description
- **Location:** East side of N.C. 211, 0.6 mi. south of junction with S.R. 1001.
- **Owner:** The Hon. Charles Rose

### Category
- **Category:** Historic Place
- **Ownership:** Private Residence
- **Status:** Unoccupied

### Owner of Property
- **Owner's Name:** Mr. and Mrs. Charles Thomas Smith
- **Address:** Route 3, Box 948, Lumberton, North Carolina

### Legal Description
- **Court House:** Robeson County Courthouse
- **City and Town:** Lumberton, North Carolina

### Survey Information
- **Title of Survey:** [Blank]
- **Date of Survey:** [Blank]
- **Depository for Survey Records:** [Blank]
- **City or Town:** [Blank]
- **State:** North Carolina
- **Code:** 37

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### Additional Instructions
- Complete all entries and applicable sections.
- Include all necessary details for the nomination process.
The Humphrey-Williams House, a two-story frame farmhouse dating from the second quarter of the nineteenth century, is located close to the road in an impressive setting of large trees, surrounded by an early wooden picket fence. A number of early outbuildings, including a barn, a carriage house, a smokehouse, and a store-post office, complete the farm complex. The house, five bays wide and three deep, is in its original form with the exception of an unobtrusive twentieth century one-story center rear wing, which replaced the original one-bay wide two-story porch. It is set on a high brick foundation and covered with plain lapped siding. Nine-over-nine sash windows with simple molded architraves beneath projecting cap molding illuminate all elevations. In each upper gable end are four-pane transom windows with the same surround. A handsome molded box cornice with short returns terminates the front and rear façades, and a narrow molded cornice continues along the gables. Two interior brick chimneys with ornamental stucco bands beneath the molded caps rise from the gable roof.

An original one-story shed porch runs across the main (south) facade. The porch roof extends beyond the porch floor, and is supported by turned posts with unusual turned capitals resembling coiled rope. The posts are set on freestanding brick piers. The treatment of the porch cornice is identical to that of the main cornice. Chamfered posts, plain balusters, and a molded handrail form the porch railing. The space enclosed by the porch is treated like an interior room, with three facade entrances with detailed architectural trim opening to the porch, and a flat-paneled wainscot extending across the façade nearly to the corners. The porch railing is identical to the interior stair railing, which enhances the interior ambience. In the center bay is a double door with transom and sidelights. The door, each leaf containing a single vertical panel, has an elaborate surround consisting of pilasters composed of slender engaged half-round moldings, with flat-paneled corner blocks, supporting a molded entablature above the door. Pilasters composed of slender vertical wooden strips which form flat panels flank the sidelights and support an identical entablature surmounting the entire entrance. Each flanking entrance is a single door containing two vertical panels set within a plain frame and surmounted by a transom and an entablature like that of the main entrance. The first-floor facade windows are distinguished from the remaining windows by an architrave composed of slender applied vertical wooden members like the center entrance pilasters.

The interior of the Humphrey-Williams House, a center-hall plan two rooms deep, continues the vernacular Greek Revival finish of the exterior. The hall is divided into a front and rear hall at both levels. The rear hall was originally open to the rear porch at both levels, but was closed in when the rear porch was removed. An open-string stair rises against the east wall in the front hall. A tall chamfered newel, plain balusters and a molded handrail form the balustrade. The flat-paneled hall wainscot, with a simple molded chair rail, is repeated on the stair spandrel and continues up the stair wall to the upper hall. Above the wainscot the spandrel is flat-paneled, and curvilinear brackets adorn the open string. With the exception of the parlor, each room has plastered walls and a wood-ceiled ceiling. The first-floor front and rear hall and the first-floor southeast
The southwest room, the parlor, the most finely finished room, has plastered walls and ceiling, with a molded plaster frieze and cornice and a large plaster ceiling medallion composed of concentric rings. The parlor mantel, the most elaborate in the house, is composed of symmetrically molded pilasters with a two-tier molded frieze, a flat-paneled center tablet, and a molded cornice and shelf.

The store-post office, located at the rear west side of the house, is a small rectangular frame building covered with plain lapped siding and a steep gable roof with plain boxed eaves. The main (south) gable and facade contains the only entrance, a diagonally sheathed batten door hung on strap hinges, with a large iron door pull. A small window with a single flat-paneled shutter is present in the front and rear. Beneath the front window is the letter chute, probably dating from 1856 when the Raft Swamp Post Office was established here. The interior is covered with wide horizontal sheathing, with exposed beaded ceiling joists. The windows are framed by a simpler version of the interior surrounds of the main house. The built-in wooden shelves and counter are perhaps original to the store.
### SIGNIFICANCE

#### PERIOD

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [ ] 20th Century

#### SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

between 1835-1856

#### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

(Choose One or More as Appropriate)

- [ ] Aboriginal
- [ ] Historic
- [ ] Prehistoric
- [ ] Agriculture
- [ ] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [ ] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other (Specify)

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Humphrey-Williams House is an unusual and well-preserved vernacular Greek Revival house, of particular significance in exhibiting the handling of porches as rooms, a regional characteristic admirably suited to the lowland climate. The full complement of early outbuildings includes an 1856 store-post office.

The Humphrey-Williams House was apparently built by Richard B. Humphrey between 1835, when he began to acquire the land on which the farm is located, and his death about 1856. At his death his orphaned children, Ann Eliza and William B., were left in common his 3,000-acre estate. During the August, 1859, term, the county court of pleas and quarter sessions divided the estate, awarding Ann Eliza and her husband Warren Williams 1,487 acres containing Richard Humphrey's house and outbuildings, valued at $6,961, and the remainder to her brother. In 1908 the Williams bequeathed the house and plantation, reduced to about 600 acres, to their children Robert W., Ida and Janie, and in 1965 it was sold to the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Thomas Smith.

The house has had little alteration, and is now under restoration. It is one of the best-preserved of the few remaining examples of antebellum domestic architecture in Robeson County, a swampy, sparsely settled area of the state in the nineteenth century. It is significant not only for the unusual application of whimsical Greek Revival architectural trim, but as an example of the fluid handling of interior and exterior space characteristic of southeastern North Carolina dwellings of the period. The facade porch is finished to resemble an interior room, and the rear hall at both levels was originally open to the outside as a porch. A portico in antis occurs at the nearby Philadelphus Presbyterian Church, which, according to county tradition, was built by the same carpenter who built the Humphrey-Williams House. The presence of several early outbuildings and the early nineteenth century store, containing the Raft Swamp Post Office established in 1856, adds to the historical integrity of the farm complex.
**Major Bibliographical References**

Research and architectural description by Ruth Little Stokes, survey specialist.
Robeson County Records, Robeson County Courthouse, Lumberton, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
Robeson County Records, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

**Geographical Data**

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**Approximate Acreage of Nominated Property:** 9 acres

**List All States and Counties for Properties Overlapping State or County Boundaries**

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**Form Prepared By**

Survey and Planning Unit
Office of Archives and History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina

**Date:** 22 June 1973

**State Liaison Officer Certification**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [X] Local [ ]

**Signature:** H. C. Jones

**Title:** State Historian/Administrator

**Date:** 22 June 1973

**National Register Verification**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

**Signature:** Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

**Date:**

**Attest:**

**Signature:** Keeper of The National Register

**Date:**
Humphrey-Williams House
Lumberton vicinity
North Carolina

State Highway Commission Map
Scale: 1/2: 1 mile
Date: 1967

Latitude
degrees minutes seconds
34 42 07

Longitude
degrees minutes seconds
79 03 47